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**An analysis of the concept of solidarity from a Dutch and Japanese perspectives:  
*solidariteit* and *kizuna***

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**Abstract**

The concept of solidarity recently (re)emerged as “new kid on the block” in bioethics. The question is how this concept can be understood in a global perspective as it is intended to be a moral basis for medical research systems, donation systems, and learning health systems. This necessitates an intercultural analysis of the concept of solidarity. To this end, we explored the common ground between understandings in Western Europe and East Asia.

We started our ethical inquiry with an examination of the Dutch concept of *solidariteit* and the Japanese concept of *kizuna*. Subsequently, we disentangled these understandings and confronted them with each other, particularly on reciprocity as key aspect of solidarity. Lastly, we explored how these insights would impact the biomedical practice of (non)participation in solidarity-based systems.

Our analyses revealed that the understandings of solidarity found common ground in the similarity or spiritual bond in a relevant context with other human beings in participation as well as non-participation in these systems. Although most aspects of solidarity were similar,

we found differences with respect to the principle of reciprocity. While the concept of *kizuna* focused commitments on the level of the collective, *solidariteit* would take into account mainly commitments on the personal level.

It is important to acknowledge these differences in reciprocity on a collective and individual level while striving for “health for all in an unequal world” in order to prevent derogation of diversity in the name of equality.